



ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 40.24

TITLE: Traffic Crash Investigation

SERIES NUMBER: 40

SERIES TITLE / SUBJECT: Law Enforcement Operations

TOPICS/ REFERENCE: Accidents, Crash Investigation, Fatalities

APPENDICIES: None

ORIGINAL / EFFECTIVE ISSUE DATE: February 13, 2008

DATE OF LAST REVISION: May 01, 2013

THIS ORDER REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RECINDED

CALEA STANDARDS: 61.2.1 - 61.2.2 - 61.2.3 - 61.2.4

Policy:

It is the policy of the Rockford Police Department to investigate traffic crashes brought to the Department's attention, to report those crashes properly, based on current law, and to take appropriate enforcement action based on evidence obtained from the investigation of any traffic crash.

Purpose:

The purpose of this General Order is to set forth policy and procedures to be followed in the investigation and reporting of traffic crashes.

This General Order is comprised of the following numbered sections:

- I. DEFINITIONS
- II. ASSIGNMENT OF TRAFFIC CRASHES
- III. TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE
- IV. FATAL OR SERIOUS TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATIONS
- V. HIT AND RUN INVESTIGATIONS
- VI. PRIVATE PROPERTY CRASHES
- VII. FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS
- VIII. CARE AND CONTROL OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
- IX. EFFECTIVE DATE
- X. REVIEWS, REVISIONS AND CANCELATIONS

I. Definitions:

- A. Personal Injury: 625 ILCS 5/11-406(a) defines personal injury as any injury requiring immediate professional treatment in a medical facility or doctor's office.

- B. Private Property Crash: A motor vehicle crash that occurs on any privately owned street, alley, driveway or parking area.
- C. State Reportable Traffic Crash: Any traffic crash resulting in death or personal injury to any person, or where property damage to any one person in excess of \$500 is sustained.
- D. Traffic Crash Reports:
 - 1. SR 1050-Illinois Traffic Crash Report form.
 - 2. SR 1050A-Illinois Traffic Crash Report/Additional Unit form.
 - 3. SR 1-Illinois Traffic Crash Report/Motorist Report form.

II. Assignment of Traffic Crashes:

- A. In general, the Traffic Division of the Rockford Police Department will be responsible for the investigation of traffic crashes occurring within the jurisdictional limits of the Department. However, traffic crash investigations can, and will, be assigned to any available Field Services Bureau as necessary.
- B. An officer will be assigned to investigate all state reportable traffic crashes.
- C. Depending upon the nature, severity and location of the traffic crash, one or more officers or supervisors will be assigned to the scene of a traffic crash reported to involve any of the following:
 - 1. Death or personal injury.
 - 2. Hit and run.
 - 3. Suspected illegal alcohol, intoxicating compound or drug use on the part of the driver or pedestrian involved.
 - 4. Damage to public owned, rented or leased vehicle(s) or property is involved.
 - 5. Crashes involving suspected hazardous materials.
 - 6. Disturbances between parties involved in the crash.
 - 7. Crashes involving school buses.
 - 8. Damage to the extent that towing of a vehicle is required.
 - 9. Traffic congestion as a result of the crash.

III. Traffic Crash Investigation Procedure:

- A. Upon arrival at the scene, officers will take charge and take appropriate action to protect the crash scene. The primary assigned officer will be in charge of the crash scene until its completion. The exception will be when supervisory personnel arrive or other officers having specialty training in dealing with the type of crash under investigation.
- B. Officers will check for injuries and provide basic first aid when possible until the arrival of trained medical personnel. Care of the injured will be turned over to trained medical personnel upon their arrival at the scene.
- C. Officers should be aware of fire hazards such as ruptured gas tanks when approaching the scene. Fire Department personnel should be requested at any scene where such hazards exist.
- D. All marked squads are supplied with a copy of the Emergency Response Guidebook. This book allows for rapid identification of DOT placards, which identify hazardous materials, and provides information concerning the nature of the hazard, emergency procedures, evacuation concerns, etc. Any officer arriving at the scene of such an accident and observing hazardous materials

placards and spilled cargo or leakage should immediately request the fire department.

1. In the event information has been relayed to the 911 Communications Center regarding spilled or leaking hazardous materials, officers responding to the scene shall arrive upwind until the material is identified and deemed safe.
- E. When officers come upon a scene involving a disturbance between drivers, witnesses or others they will separate the involved parties as quickly and safely as possible. If criminal charges are to be filed due to the disturbance, standard arrest procedures will be followed.
- F. Officers will attempt to obtain the names and statements of any witnesses and include information provided by them in the crash report.
- G. When interviewing the participants in the crash, officers should speak with them separately whenever possible while looking for signs of fatigue, intoxication or other physical conditions that may be a contributing factor in the crash.
- H. When there are no injuries at the scene, officers should attempt to move vehicles out of the roadway to clear congestion when practical. If any involved vehicles are immovable, tow trucks should be requested immediately. Guidelines in General Order 40.06 – *Impounding or Towing of Motor Vehicles* must be followed for towing wrecked vehicles.
- I. Officers should complete the SR 1050- Illinois Traffic Crash Report form on the scene so the exchange of information between the involved parties can be completed and provided to them. The SR 1050 – Illinois Traffic Crash Report shall be completed using the Mobile, Capture & Reporting (MCR) program. MCR is available on all MDT's.

IV. Fatal or Serious Traffic Crash Investigations:

- A. Upon arrival at the scene of a possible fatal or serious injury crash, officers will check all involved parties for injuries and determine the most seriously injured party. If possible, officers will administer basic first aid until arrival of trained medical personnel. Officers should not attempt to administer aid or treatment beyond their capabilities.
- B. If not already dispatched, officers should request a supervisor to the scene, as well as additional Units to secure the scene. The responding supervisor or a traffic crash investigator will be responsible for requesting the Shift Commander notify the Traffic Division Supervisor. The Shift Commander will also make other notifications as necessary.
- C. The initially dispatched officer will remain at the scene after arrival of trained traffic crash personnel to assist with scene control, securing of witnesses and involved persons, and to provide assistance to personnel of the Identification Unit with evidence collection and photographs. The initially dispatched officer will leave their assignment after the on-scene supervisor gives permission.
- D. The duties of assigned traffic crash investigator(s) will include, but are not limited to the following:
 1. Taking measurements and preparing a scale diagram.
 2. Directing or assisting in the collection of evidence and photographs by Identification Unit personnel.
 3. Interviewing witnesses and occupants of involved vehicles.

4. Preparing and completing the SR 1050- Illinois Traffic Crash Report form, using the Mobile, Capture & Reporting (MCR) program.
 5. Making arrangements for testing that may be required for involved vehicles.
 6. Obtaining information needed for review of the traffic crash with the States Attorney's office.
 7. Arranging the removal of vehicles to appropriate locations.
 8. Control and custody of personal property of involved persons.
 9. Any other duties necessary to complete the investigation.
- E. Any traffic crash scene involving a suspected hazardous material should be responded to, and initially treated, as a serious traffic crash scene. Until trained hazardous materials personnel advise otherwise, officers will respond and secure the scene using guidelines of General Order 40.18 – *Hazardous Materials Incidents*.

V. Hit and Run Investigations:

- A. Upon arrival at a Hit and Run traffic crash, the assigned officer will attempt to gather the following information:
 1. Best possible description of the vehicle that fled the scene, to include license plate information.
 2. Location and extent of damage to the offending vehicle.
 3. Description of the driver and any passengers.
 4. Last known direction of travel.
- B. Once this information is obtained, the assigned officer will notify communications of the information for a local dispatch and, if necessary, a regional dispatch.
- C. If damage is severe, the assigned officer may request Identification Unit personnel for crash scene processing. Otherwise, assigned officers are responsible for collection of crash scene evidence.
- D. Hit and run crashes involving death, serious injury, hazardous materials, suspected impaired drivers or any other situation detailed in this Order will be handled the same as if the crash did not involve a hit and run.
- E. The assigned officer is responsible for the immediate follow-up investigation, if practical. This would include locating and impounding the offending vehicle and issuing traffic citations to the offender.
- F. Detailed follow-up investigations of hit and run crashes will be conducted by personnel assigned by the Traffic Division supervisor
- G. In addition to required crash reports, assigned officers will document their investigation on a general case incident report.

VI. Private Property Crashes:

- A. When an officer responds to a traffic crash occurring on private property with damages in an amount over \$500.00 (the vehicles are driveable), the drivers will be instructed to go in person to the front desk of the PSB to file the report, after the officer has checked to ensure each involved driver has a driver's license and insurance.
- B. An officer will investigate private property traffic crashes when any of the following situations is present.

1. Either driver is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol, intoxicating compound, other drugs or a combination thereof.
2. There is personal injury to any involved party.
3. Reckless driving is suspected as a factor in the crash.
4. The crash involves a hit and run.
5. Either driver does not have insurance.
6. Either driver does not have a valid driver's license.

VII. Follow-Up Investigations:

- A. Follow-up investigations of traffic crashes are undertaken in support of possible prosecution. When warranted, this follow-up should include at a minimum:
 1. Collection of additional data about driver(s), pedestrian, vehicle(s), traffic control devices or any related information necessary for completion of the investigation.
 2. Obtaining/recording statements from witnesses.
 3. Reconstruction of crashes by a qualified Traffic Crash Reconstructionist.
 4. Preparation of reports to support a criminal charge arising from the traffic crash under investigation.
- B. The Department has personnel trained in traffic crash investigation techniques, to include reconstruction. These officers will be assigned as necessary to carry out follow-up investigations.
- C. The decision to conduct follow-up investigations of traffic crashes will be made when deemed appropriate by the Traffic Division Supervisor, Support Services Bureau Commander, the Chief of Police, or as requested by the prosecuting attorney. Generally, follow-up investigations are not conducted in support of civil litigation unless the City of Rockford is a party to the litigation.

VIII. Care and Control of Personal Property:

- A. Officers responding to the scene of a crash should ensure the property belonging to a traffic crash victim is protected from theft or damage and is removed to a place of safekeeping if the owner is unable to care for it.
- B. If necessary, officers will take control of such property and place it into evidence per General Order *60.01 – Collection & Handling of Evidence and Found Property*.

IX. Effective Date:

The effective date of this Order is February 13, 2008.

X. Reviews, Revisions and Cancellations:

- A. This General Order will be reviewed annually by the Traffic Division Supervisor and, when necessary, revised or cancelled in accordance with the procedures for reviewing written directives established in General Order *10.01 – Written Directives*.
- B. This Order is a revision of and supercedes General Order *40.24 - Traffic Crash Investigations* issued November 7, 2006.
- C. Any employee with suggestions for revision and / or improvements to this Order are encouraged to submit their ideas to the Commander of the Field Services Bureau.

BY ORDER OF

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Chet Epperson

Chief of Police